Course: UNIV 500
Term: Fall 2016
Room: Hanszen 207
Class: Friday, 9:00-11:30

PRINCIPLES OF EFFECTIVE COLLEGE TEACHING

CONTACT INFORMATION

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Office Hours: By Appointment

COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course provides an overview of essential, research-based methods used by college instructors to enhance the quality of student learning. Topics will include course and syllabus design, student engagement, classroom management, and more. This course will culminate with the development of a syllabus and a statement of teaching philosophy.

LEARNING OUTCOMES

Insofar as this course contributes to the larger program outcomes of the CTE's proposed Graduate Certificate in Teaching and Learning, it is designed to help students to:

1. Develop an understanding of and explain best practices in teaching and learning
2. Communicate individual pedagogical values and approaches to teaching and learning
3. Identify and evaluate pedagogical methods that apply to students' disciplines and teaching interests
4. Situate the role of teaching in higher education and the job market

More specifically, this course will prepare students to:

1. Implement teaching strategies in relation to specific learning goals
2. Assess whether students have achieved learning goals
3. Use various pedagogical approaches to engage diverse learners
4. Formulate a syllabus that explicitly communicates their teaching practice
5. Articulate their teaching philosophy and explain how it informs their teaching practice

REQUIRED TEXTS AND MATERIALS

The following text has been ordered and should be available at the Rice University Bookstore. You are welcome to purchase it elsewhere, but we will be using it during the second week of classes.

Ken Bain. *What the Best College Teachers Do*. Harvard University Press, 2004. ISBN 978-0674013254

Additional readings will be available on the course Canvas page. Students must have a valid NetID to log into Canvas and are required to do so in order to participate in this course.

ASSIGNMENTS AND ACTIVITIES

Teaching Philosophy: Early in the semester, you will be asked to complete an initial draft of a teaching philosophy. Both the readings as well as the Teaching Goals Inventory we ask you to complete during the first week of class will be particularly helpful.

Course Design: Over the course of the term, you will be asked to complete a series of small assignments that contribute to the overall goal of producing a complete syllabus by the end of the term. These include writing a course description, selecting learning outcomes, writing exams and/or essay assignments, choosing texts, designing an in-class activity, drafting a schedule for the course, and deciding upon policies.

GRADING AND EVALUATION

We envision these seminars to be more like workshops than formal coursework, so our goal for assessment is formative instead of summative. That said, we have set high standards for the course and want it to be of significant intellectual value for participants. As a way of striking a balance, we will employ a specifications grading system this semester. Like most grading systems, "specs" grading lays out specific standards for earning various grades at the beginning of the semester. The difference is that these standards are not set to reflect your average performance on all assignments. Instead, they are set to reflect the extent to which you have or have not met the specific learning goals of this course, judged by the extent to which you have completed various assignments and activities. Thus, earning an A requires meeting all of our goals, an A- requires meeting most, etc. As the course instructor, I have laid out the specifications for grading below. In this course, the grades will be assigned as follows:

A No more than two absences
- Always participates
- Successful, on-time completion of all assignments (syllabus, teaching philosophy, in-class assignments, etc.)
- Completes all reading

A- No more than two absences
- Always participates
- Late delivery of one assignment; on-time completion of all the rest
- Completes all reading

B+ No more than three absences
- Almost always participates
- Late delivery of one assignment; on-time completion of all the rest
- Completes all reading

B No more than three absences
- Almost always participates
- Late delivery of two assignments; on-time completion of all the rest
- Completes all reading

B- No more than four absences
- Sometimes participates
- Late delivery of three assignments, or failure to turn in one assignment entirely
- Completes all reading.

As students of the course, I would like you to identify, in advance, the course goals you expect to meet this semester (and therefore the grade you plan to earn). ***Please email me your goals/plan no later than Thursday, September 8th at noon.*** In this message, be sure to identify the specific work you plan to complete, as well as the grade you will earn if you are successful.

COURSE POLICIES

Use of Electronics: Although we have no formal policy banning the use of electronics in class, it is worth noting that recent research has found that taking hand-written notes improves learning more than taking typed notes on a laptop or other electronic device. If a particular in-class activity requires the use of a specific electronic device, we will let you know in advance so that you can bring that device to class.

Disability Support Services: If you have a documented disability or other condition that may affect academic performance you should: 1) make sure this documentation is on file with Disability Support Services (Allen Center, Room 111 /adarice@rice.edu / x5841) to determine the accommodations you need; and 2) talk with me to discuss your accommodation needs.

Special Circumstances: If you have any temporary or long-term needs (academic, physical, personal) please contact us during our office hours or after class. Do not wait until the last minute to inform us of a problem, as it will be more difficult to come up with a solution. We are supportive and understanding of most situations and in the interest of protecting your privacy, we don't always need details to find a way to work it out.

Academic Honesty: In this course, all students will be held to the standards of the Rice Honor Code, a code that you pledged to honor when you matriculated at this institution. If you are unfamiliar with the details of this code and how it is administered, you should consult the Honor System Handbook at http://honor.rice.edu/honor-system-handbook/. This handbook outlines the University's expectations for the integrity of your academic work, the procedures for resolving alleged violations of those expectations, and the rights and responsibilities of students and faculty members throughout the process. If you are questioning whether you have documented or cited your sources properly, it is your responsibility to see us about these issues prior to submitting an assignment. We are here to help you resolve these issues before they could negatively affect your academic career.

Syllabus Change: This syllabus is only a guide for the course and is subject to change with advanced notice.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

Graduate Fellows: The CTE recently designed a new program for Graduate Fellows. Fellows are chosen from those students who have completed the entire Graduate Certificate in Teaching and Learning, and they are selected via a competitive application process. Each Fellow receives a stipend for her or his work. This semester, Graduate Fellows will be assisting with the peer review of your teaching philosophies and your syllabi.

Periodicals/Blogs on Higher Education: As you prepare for a future career in higher education, we encourage you to begin reading and/or following a number of popular higher education periodicals and blogs. This list is by no means comprehensive, but you should begin here:

- The Chronicle of Higher Education (its primary content, as well as its numerous blogs)
- Inside Higher Ed
- Faculty Focus
- The Teaching Professor
- Hybrid Pedagogy
- Times Higher Education (UK)
- Pedagogy Unbound
- The Atlantic (Education Section)
- Slate (Education Section)
- The New York Times (Education Section)
- The Guardian (Education Section)

Twitter: The social media site Twitter has been gaining tremendous currency in the academic world as an instrument for sharing information, commenting on issues related to higher education, addressing issues in one's

particular field, etc. As a result, I encourage you to experiment with Twitter this semester, if you have not done so already. It can be a great resource for your coursework, as well as professional networking. You can follow most (if not all) of the periodicals and blogs listed above, as well as the CTE (@RiceCTE) and the three faculty in the CTE (@joshua_r_eyler, @elizabethabarre, and @Robin_Paige_1). If you want to follow more people who are tweeting about teaching and learning in higher education, you can begin by following many of the accounts @RiceCTE is following.

COURSE SCHEDULE

8/26	**9/2**	**9/9**
The Nature and Purpose of Higher Education in the United States	NO CLASS	Constructing a Personal Teaching Philosophy, Part I
9/16	**9/23**	**9/30**
Constructing a Personal Teaching Philosophy, Part II	Setting the Stage: Ken Bain, *What the Best College Teachers Do*	Setting the Stage: Ken Bain, *What the Best College Teachers Do*
10/7	**10/14**	**10/21**
Understanding Students and How They Learn	Course Design, Part I: Backward Design, Universal Design, and the Nature of Learning Outcomes	Course Design, Part II: Planning Assessment of Learning Outcomes
10/28	**11/4**	**11/11**
Course Design, Part III: Selecting Content and Choosing Texts	NO CLASS	Course Design, Part IV: Planning for Learning (Lectures, Discussions, Writing, or Problem Solving Activities)
11/18	**11/25**	**12/2**
Course Design, Part V: Planning for Learning (Group Work, Presentations, Field Work, etc.)	NO CLASS—Thanksgiving Holiday	Teaching Identities, Personal Identities, and the Intersection Between the Two

**All reading and writing assignments are outlined in detail on the Canvas site for our course.